Stopping the

A Safer Future for B.C. Women

Ministry of Women's Equality
Province of British Columbia

93-02333/

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data
British Columbia. Ministry of Women's Equality.
Stopping the violence

ISBN 0-7726-7379-9

1. Family violence - British Columbia.
2. Family violence - Government policy - British Columbia.
I. Title.

HQ809.3.C32B742 1992 362.82'92'09711 C92-092314-3

Responding to Victims of Violence

- Every 17 minutes, a sexual assault involving forced intercourse occurs in Canada; 90% of victims are female.
- During 1990, an average of two women were killed by their partners each week in Canada.
- Between 50,000 and 70,000 school-age children in British Columbia are estimated to have witnessed their mothers being beaten.
- It is estimated that approximately 300,000 women in British Columbia were sexually assaulted as children.
- The National Survey on Abuse of the Elderly in Canada projects that 53 of every 1,000 elderly persons living in private homes in British Columbia are abused.

Building Partnerships with Communities

Many service providers are calling for a new, meaningful working relationship between community and government. Building that partnership is an important focus of the Ministry of Women's Equality. We recognize that communities know best what their needs are and how best to meet those needs, but they require support and resources to get the job done.

The role of the Ministry of Women's Equality is to support communities by providing resources and working together with community agencies to develop and implement policies and deliver services.

Other New Services for Women Who are Victims of Violence

- more dollars to safely house women and their children leaving violent homes. (Ministry of Social Services)
- enhanced funds for staff and services at a number of existing transition houses. Assistance will be available for more women victims seeking a safe and independent life for themselves and their children. (Ministry of Social Services)
- core funding to help ensure the B.C./Yukon Society of Transition Houses is able to continue its services in support of battered women. This money includes upgrading the training of workers. (Ministry of Social Services)
- more services for children who have witnessed their mothers being abused. (Ministry of Social Services)
- improved counselling in Mental Health Centres for women who are victims of violence. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- exploring the feasibility of a residential or day program for women who suffer because their partners misuse alcohol and drugs. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- improved opportunities for women to overcome their misuse of alcohol and drugs. Women will have better access to residential treatment and detoxification services. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- community counselling for individuals who were the victims of child sexual abuse when living in provincially-funded facilities. (ministries of Health/Seniors, Social Services, Attorney General and Education/Multiculturalism/Human Rights)
- expansion of family support services. (Ministry of Social Services)
- enhanced community victim support services (Ministry of Attorney General)

Supporting Aboriginal Communities

A recent survey of violence in British Columbia's aboriginal communities indicated 86% of the respondents had experienced or witnessed family violence.

However, current programs fall far short of meeting the needs of aboriginal peoples experiencing violence. Aboriginal peoples living in remote areas often have no physical way to access services. Some aboriginal peoples have found services culturally inappropriate. Others have experienced racism.

Our government recognizes the need to increase access to services for aboriginal peoples. The Ministry of Women's Equality and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs are committed to the development of new services that meet the unique needs of aboriginal families. Fundamental to effective programming is respect for the principles of self-determination and the ability of aboriginal peoples to design and deliver services that meet their needs.

Additional Support for Aboriginal Communities

- additional funding of family support services for aboriginal peoples. (Ministry of Social Services)
- exploring ways to increase aboriginal control of programs, services and funds related to ending family violence. A plan of action will follow. (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs)
- documenting successes aboriginal communities have had in reducing violence so they can be shared with other communities. (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs)
- compiling data and recommendations from all recent research reports and literature relating to First Nations' family violence. This will help focus government action. (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs)

As an immediate support to agencies, new money will now be available from the Ministry of Women's Equality to community agencies for resources such as equipment for women who are hearing-impaired, or translation of materials for immigrant women.

At the same time, the Ministry of Women's Equality recognizes that the pressing problems of violence experienced by women with disabilities, immigrant women, women from visible minorities, elderly women and other women who face additional barriers will not be solved overnight. We will, therefore, be providing new dollars to enable community organizations to participate in discussions aimed at developing long-term solutions and approaches to dismantling barriers for all women in B.C.

More Support for Elderly Women

- creating a guide that communities can use to make the most of their resources to address elder abuse. *Principles, Procedures and Protocols* introduces ethics, resources and models of service. It was compiled by the Inter-ministry Committee on Elder Abuse. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- using special procedures to address abuse in licensed community care facilities. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- developing an inter-ministry strategic plan to address elder abuse. It will include research, education, prevention and intervention. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- publishing the most comprehensive curriculum resource British Columbia's communities have had on elder abuse. The three-part curriculum explores what elder abuse is, how to identify it, and what can be done. It will be used to train a wide range of community workers. A partner handbook will give service providers information on how to access government and community resources. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- increasing the number of senior citizen counsellors by 10%. Increased training will equip counsellors to give better service to elderly victims of abuse. (Ministry of Social Services)

STOPPING THE VIOLENCE:
A Safer Future for B.C. Women

Violence is part of the reality of life for too many women in British Columbia. Across Canada, one in eight women is assaulted by her male partner; one in four will be sexually assaulted sometime in her life. It is time for the violence to stop.

Our government is making the elimination of violence against women a priority. The Ministry of Women's Equality, together with six other ministries across government, has put new money into more services for more communities in B.C.

This means that more women will have access to the services they need, whether they live in the North or the Kootenays, in the Cariboo or on Vancouver Island.

An important part of this commitment is the opportunity it provides for government to create new and stronger partnerships with service providers in communities throughout the province. Working daily with women who are victims of violence, these service providers built the foundation of services British Columbia has today. Their experience and expertise is essential in helping to create more and better services for B.C. women.

Building on these partnerships, the Ministry of Women's Equality will work with women, front-line workers, and service agencies to enhance existing prevention and intervention services, and establish services where none exist.

In particular, women with disabilities, women from visible minorities, immigrant women, and other women who face additional barriers will have greater access to the services they need.

At the same time, we will be providing additional dollars to aboriginal communities to support the efforts of aboriginal people to eliminate family violence.

By working together to develop improved services, communities and government are taking the steps needed to stop violence against women - and help make life safer for B.C. women, now and in the future.

Local Solutions To Local Needs

All across our province, British Columbians are working hard to stop violence against women. Communities have come together to provide counselling and services to victims of violence and to increase local awareness. This work is vital, and too often these efforts fall short because of inadequate resources and inconsistent funding.

The elimination of violence against women is a goal shared by all British Columbians, and we believe it is time for a clear and meaningful commitment by government toward that goal.

The Ministry of Women's Equality outlined that long-term commitment in our government's first Throne and Budget speeches, beginning this year with $10 million in new money. It is funding that will help expand and establish services for women around the province, and support the efforts of aboriginal peoples to eliminate family violence in their communities.

Most of these dollars will go directly into communities to help provide local solutions to local needs, based on the following objectives:

- building a strong and lasting partnership between community groups and government;
- helping provide counselling services to more women who are victims of violence;
- supporting aboriginal communities in their holistic approach to services that help eliminate family violence;
- making services more accessible to women with disabilities, women from visible minorities, immigrant women and other women who face additional barriers;
- breaking the cycle of violence and power through education, training and offender treatment programs.

More Counselling Services for More Women

Community counselling services have been struggling to meet the needs of women who are victims of wife assault, sexual assault and childhood abuse. In many communities, there are long waiting lists for service. In other communities, there is no service at all.

In response to the urgency of requests, funding will now be available for more counselling for women who are victims of violence. These dollars will be available to agencies through the ministries that already fund them and will go to:

- establish new sexual assault centres in the province;
- expand services at existing sexual assault centres;
- expand counselling services within victim assistance programs, transition houses, and related community-based programs;
- provide new services in rural and isolated communities where no counselling exists.

Counsellors and other community-based service providers have identified the need for standards to ensure service quality. The ministries of Women's Equality, Attorney General, Social Services, and Health/Seniors will be working with service providers to develop service standards for counselling for women who are victims of violence.

Increased public awareness of the new services being developed may encourage more women to seek help. Demand for service may increase. This initiative does not mean communities will suddenly have the capacity to meet the total need for counselling services of all women who are victims of violence. It will, however, help to bring communities much closer to that goal. Through these new services, more women will have access to more services in more communities.

Dismantling the Barriers for ALL Women

Girls and women in British Columbia face barriers that limit their opportunities and choices--in the home, in the workplace, and in the community. Immigrant women, aboriginal women, and women of colour confront additional barriers in accessing needed services when violence affects their lives. Many of these women are cut off from needed help for a variety of reasons: they may not speak English, they may face a lack of understanding of their cultural values, or they may be confronted by racism when they try to seek help. Elderly women, lesbians, women who are poor, and women with disabilities face their own additional barriers. Service providers require the resources and support to enable them to respond better to these needs, and to ensure their services are accessible to all women.

Breaking the Cycle of Violence and Power

Attitudes that encourage violence need to change. Prevention measures are essential to address the causes and to develop ways to break the cycle of violence. Education and public discussion are needed to expose activities that make women vulnerable and powerless.

Police, prosecutors, judges, service providers in the health system, teachers, social workers, and other government staff who work with women who are victims of violence and with offenders must be well trained. They need to know how their attitudes influence their work, and to have the skills to intervene effectively. The Ministry of Women's Equality will be working with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, and the other ministries involved in this initiative, to develop and implement a long-term plan to enhance the training of all those who must respond to the needs of women who are victims of violence.

We will be providing support to the Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors to continue to improve training for those working with elderly women who have been abused.

We will also be helping the Ministry of Education/Multiculturalism/Human Rights to build on and enhance in-service training materials for teachers that focus on preventing violence against women. Under this initiative, classroom materials will also be designed that encourage students to become non-violent adults. Content will include realities facing aboriginal youth, students from multicultural backgrounds and those with disabilities.

As well, the Ministry of Women's Equality will be providing short-term grants to communities to increase public awareness and community education aimed at eliminating violence against women.

Stopping violence against women requires effective methods of stopping abusive behaviour. With that aim in mind, the Ministry of Women's Equality will be providing support to the Ministry of Attorney General, the Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, to fund more and better treatment programs for men who batter.

More Education, Training Initiatives

- enhancing training of prosecutors, police, and others in the justice system to more effectively meet the needs of women who are victims of violence. (Ministry of Attorney General)
- developing training packages for use by Alcohol and Drug Program professionals that focus on the needs of women and children who are victims of violence. (Ministry of Health/Seniors)
- funding the British Columbia Teachers' Federation to design a workshop and materials to support the prevention of family violence. (Ministry of Education/Multiculturalism/Human Rights)
- funding selected school districts and community-based agencies to develop educational materials for students. Content emphasizes breaking the generational cycle of violence. (Ministry of Education/Multiculturalism/Human Rights)

Working Towards a Coordinated Approach

The Ministry of Women's Equality is working closely with other ministries and with communities to ensure a coordinated approach to planning, program development and service delivery. Coordination must occur at both the provincial and local levels.

The Ministry of Women's Equality is chairing an Inter-ministry Committee on the Intervention and Prevention of Violence Against Women. This committee was responsible for bringing together the recommendations of the community and our government's priorities in developing the initiatives outlined in this document. In partnership with communities, the inter-ministry committee will build upon the initiatives already underway to plan and implement a continuing coordinated response to the issue of violence against women.

As part of this effort, a branch in the Ministry of Women's Equality will follow through on planning, coordination, and implementation of initiatives in this area as quickly as possible.

One of the immediate tasks of the Inter-ministry Committee on the Intervention and Prevention of Violence Against Women will be to work toward a "one community agency - one contract" approach to service funding and delivery. Currently, the mix of government programs and services can be confusing for women who seek help. Front-line agencies feel the same frustration when seeking resources. The goals of this approach: straightforward access to funding ministries and user-friendly contracting procedures for front-line agencies.

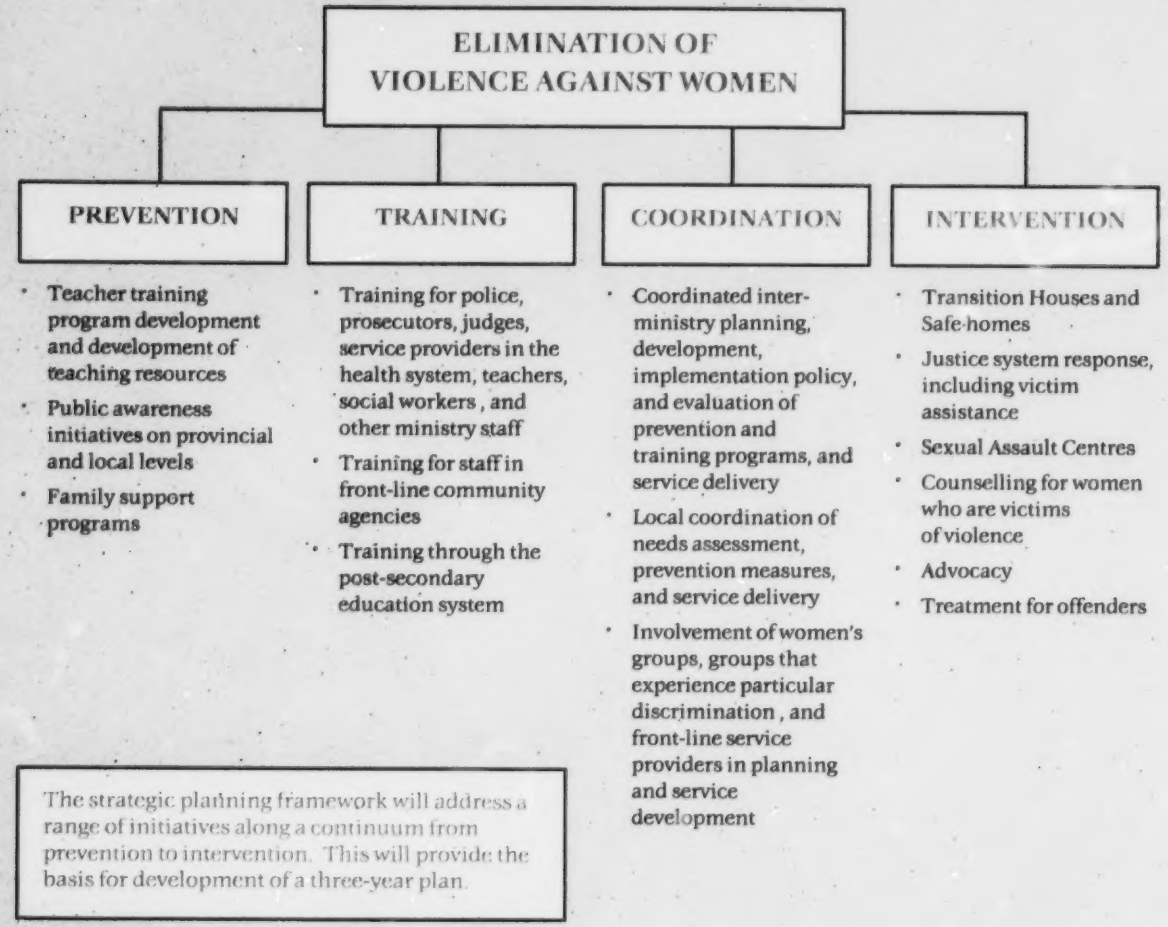
The central focus of the inter-ministry committee's planning is to ensure that women in British Columbia are safe–now and in the future. That means planning and putting in place a continuum of services from primary prevention to intervention. Appendix A sets out the framework for current and future government action on violence against women. Within this continuum, the inter-ministry committee is developing:

- an Integrated Funding Model to streamline funding from all ministries to community agencies addressing violence against women;
- guidelines for funding community counselling;
- service delivery models appropriate to the needs of aboriginal people to assist in planning expanded services;
- standards for treatment programs for abusive men;
- models to ensure the safety of women who are assaulted;
- ways to capture data on violence against women that can strengthen custody and access reports presented to the courts.

Ministries will continue to be responsible for developing and implementing their own initiatives (e.g. The Ministry of Attorney General is developing a sexual assault policy for the justice system). But all initiatives related to violence against women will be integrated into the overall coordinated plan of the Inter-ministry Committee on the Intervention and Prevention of Violence Against Women.

At the local level coordination to link the full range of services is also essential. Together with communities, the inter-ministry committee will be building on the work of the Wife Assault Coordination Project to develop improved, coordinated service delivery models. These models will assist local communities to work together to ensure that women who are victims of violence receive the help and support they need in the most effective, consistent way possible.

To make sure planning and programming are tied to women's needs, the Ministry of Women's Equality will need excellent communication links with British Columbia communities. These will be established with community-based workers, immigrant women, elderly women, aboriginal women, women of colour, women with disabilities, women who are poor, lesbians and women living in isolated areas. Efforts will be made to ensure community involvement at local, regional and provincial levels, in both urban and rural areas of the province.


ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
PREVENTION
Teacher training program development and development of teaching resources
Public awareness initiatives on provincial and local levels
Family support programs
TRAINING
Training for police, prosecutors, judges, service providers in the health system, teachers, social workers , and other ministry staff
Training for staff in front-line community agencies
Training through the post-secondary education system
COORDINATION
Coordinated inter-ministry planning, development, implementation policy, and evaluation of prevention and training programs, and service delivery
Local coordination of needs assessment, prevention measures, and service delivery
Involvement of women's groups, groups that experience particular discrimination , and front-line service providers in planning and service development
INTERVENTION
Transition Houses and Safe-homes
Justice system response, including victim assistance
Sexual Assault Centres
Counselling for women who are victims of violence
Advocacy
Treatment for offenders
The strategic planning framework will address a range of initiatives along a continuum from prevention to intervention. This will provide the basis for development of a three-year plan.

Building a Safe Future

Action to eliminate violence against women is, and will continue to be, a priority of our government.

The initiatives outlined in this document are a beginning. They are a first step towards the development of a comprehensive, coordinated continuum of services aimed at preventing violence against women, and ensuring that all women in B.C. have access to the support they need when violence does occur.

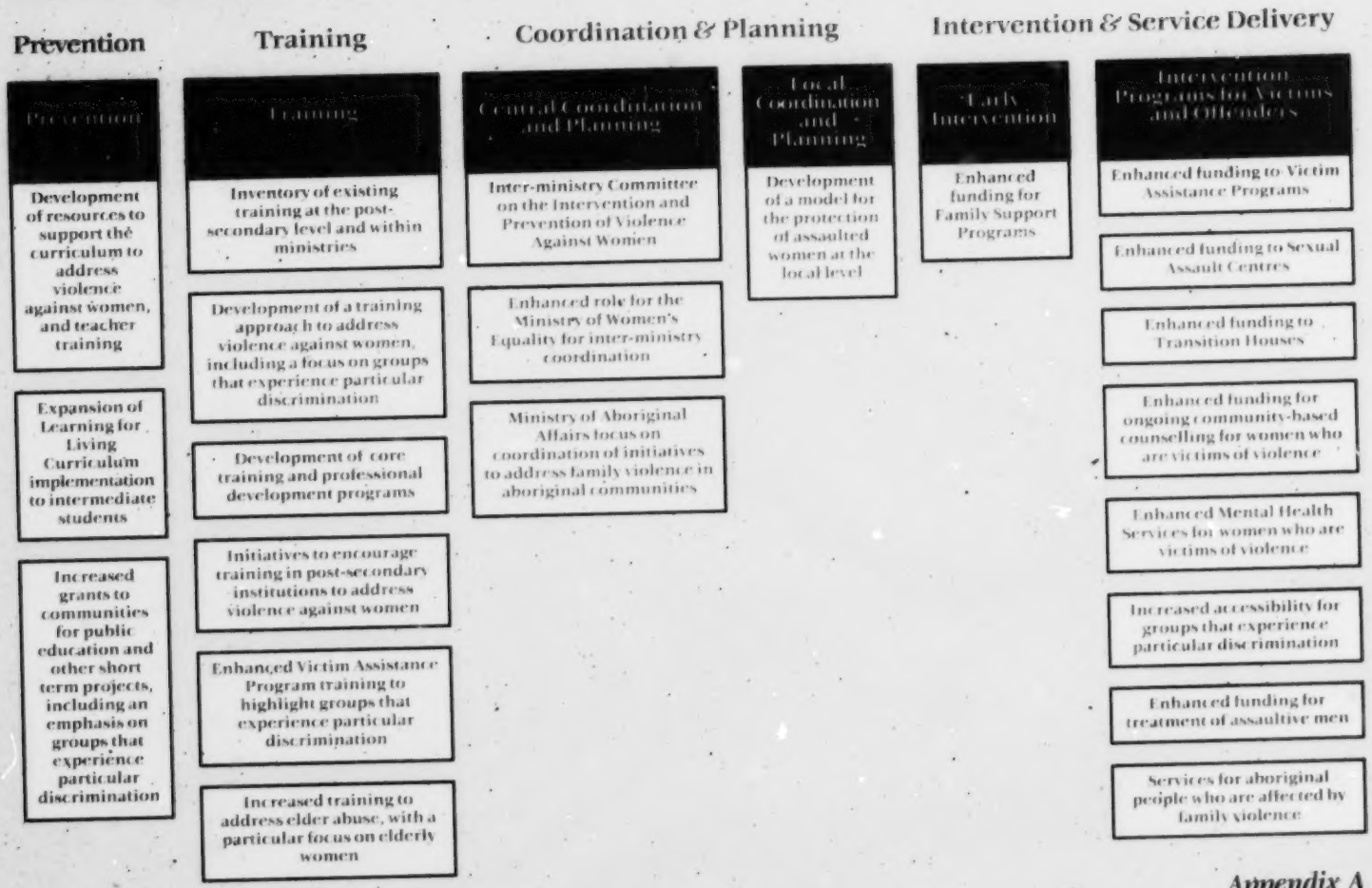
Direction for the next steps will come from communities, from the women who are victims of violence, and from those who work with them everyday.

Together with our partners in government and in the community, the Ministry of Women's Equality will play a coordinating role in developing and implementing current and future initiatives.

We will continue to work closely with other ministries, with women, with community organizations, and with front-line workers to build a safer future for all women in British Columbia.

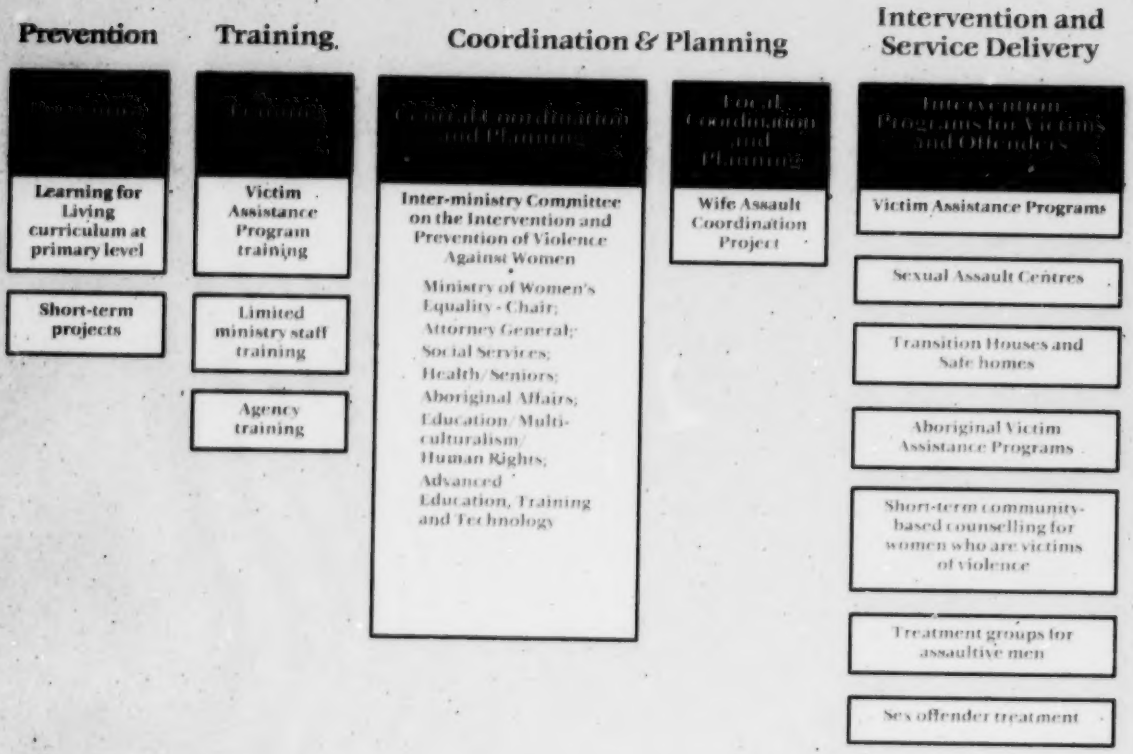
PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

NEW AND ENHANCED PROGRAMS 1992-1993


Prevention
Training
Coordination & Planning
Intervention & Service Delivery
Prevention
Development of resources to support the curriculum to address violence against women, and teacher training
Expansion of Learning for Living Curriculum implementation to intermediate students
Increased grants to communities for public education and other short term projects, including an emphasis on groups that experience particular discrimination
Training
Inventory of existing training at the post-secondary level and within ministries
Development of a training approach to address violence against women, including a focus on groups that experience particular discrimination
Development of core training and professional development programs
Initiatives to encourage training in post-secondary institutions to address violence against women
Enhanced Victim Assistance Program training to highlight groups that experience particular discrimination
Increased training to address elder abuse, with a particular focus on elderly women
Central Coordination and Planning
Inter-ministry Committee on the Intervention and Prevention of Violence Against Women
Enhanced role for the Ministry of Women's Equality for inter-ministry coordination
Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs focus on coordination of initiatives to address family violence in aboriginal communities
Local Coordination and Planning
Development of a model for the protection of assaulted women at the local level
Early Intervention
Enhanced funding for Family Support Programs
Intervention Programs for Victims and Offenders
Enhanced funding to Victim Assistance Programs
Enhanced funding to Sexual Assault Centres
Enhanced funding to Transition Houses
Enhanced funding for ongoing community-based counselling for women who are victims of violence
Enhanced Mental Health Services for women who are victims of violence
Increased accessibility for groups that experience particular discrimination
Enhanced funding for treatment of assaultive men
Services for aboriginal people who are affected by family violence

Appendix A

EXISTING PROGRAMS 1991-1992



Appendix A